THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO
1891 · FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY · 1941

ROUND TABLE

10 CENTS

A RADIO DISCUSSION OF

The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire

G. A. BORGESE
S. WILLIAM HALPERIN
FRANK SMOTHERS

368th BROADCAST IN COOPERATION WITH THE NATIONAL BROADCASTING COMPANY • 156

MARCH 9, 1941

The University of Chicago

ROUND TABLE

Published weekly. 10 cents a copy; five copies, 25 cents; half-year subscription, 26 issues, one dollar. Published by the University of Chicago, Chicago, Illinois. Entered as second-class matter January 3, 1939, at the post office at Chicago, Illinois, under the Act of March 3, 1879.

No. 156

NOTE

The supplementary information contained in the footnotes to the following text, developed by staff research, is not to be considered as representing the opinions of the ROUND TABLE *speakers. Following the transcript of the broadcast are questions which readers may wish to use for analysis and discussion. It is hoped that teachers and discussion leaders may find this additional service of the* ROUND TABLE *transcript helpful in their study of the subject discussed in the broadcast.*

THE DECLINE AND FALL OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE

A UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO ROUND TABLE BROADCAST*

•

G. A. Borgese, Professor of Italian Literature, University of Chicago

S. William Halperin, Assistant Professor of History, University of Chicago

Frank Smothers, former Rome correspondent, *Chicago Daily News*

* A radio discussion broadcast from the University of Chicago over the Red Network of the National Broadcasting Company, Sunday, March 9, 1941, at 1:30 P.M., Central Standard Time.

The Round Table, oldest educational program continuously on the air, is broadcast entirely without a script. Subjects are chosen because of their social, political, or economic significance. The program has no "ax to grind." In the selection of speakers, the effort is to provide a balanced discussion by participants who have special competence and knowledge. The opinion of each speaker is his own and in no way involves the responsibility of either the University of Chicago or the National Broadcasting Company.

THE DECLINE AND FALL OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE

•

MR. HALPERIN: March 8 was a very black day for Mussolini. He received bad news from the United States. The "lease-lend" bill was enacted and another nail was driven into the coffin of Italian fascism.

MR. SMOTHERS: And while Washington was taking this action Mussolini, as in the past, seems to be continuing to give Hitler all *war* short of *aid*.

MR. BORGESE: I think that the news is really very bad and the behavior of the Italian press during the last days is very interesting because it has been very furiously attacking America, which means that the Italians are worried.

MR. SMOTHERS: The announcement today in Rome, that we are intervening, shows how worried they are.[1]

MR. HALPERIN: Ever since Italy entered this war last June[2] she has been leading with her chin, taking reverse after reverse, and defeat after defeat. Could you, Smothers, give us a few of the painful details?

MR. SMOTHERS: Well, even today the announcement by the Greek War Ministry in Athens, that the Italians have suffered their

---

[1] *The newspaper "Il Popolo di Roma" accused the United States of a "scandalous interference" in European affairs by reason of the alleged attempt of President Roosevelt to keep Jugoslavia from joining the Rome-Berlin-Tokyo axis.*

[2] *For the* ROUND TABLE *discussion of the entrance of Italy into the war, see the broadcast "Italy Marches," June 16, 1940.*

worst defeat since the middle of January, shows that the reverses are continuing. The Greeks seem to have taken mountain heights in Central Albania and some 2,000 Italian prisoners, but this is simply the last incident in a train of reverses which began almost as soon as the Greek campaign got under way.

MR. BORGESE: Mussolini wanted to celebrate the anniversary of the March on Rome and so he started the conquest of Greece.[3]

MR. SMOTHERS: Yes.

MR. HALPERIN: That was a great celebration, wasn't it?

MR. BORGESE: It was a bad one!

MR. HALPERIN: Now, of course, the story of Italian defeats is pretty familiar to most readers of newspapers, but I think they are not quite aware of the forces, the reasons, the various factors that have contributed to this very serious Italian situation.

MR. SMOTHERS: One of the factors, of course, is that Mussolini from the beginning has based his policy on something that Italy does not have in competition with the other European powers —*force*. Italy doesn't have the materials which are needed for a policy of force.

MR. HALPERIN: Will you be more specific about that?

MR. SMOTHERS: She doesn't have oil; she doesn't have iron. Germany produces ten times as much iron as does Italy; and Italy doesn't have coal (*see pictographs, pages 13 and 15*). These things are necessary for a policy of force, and Mussolini simply didn't have them.[4]

---

[3] *The march on Rome took place October 24, 1922, and Italy invaded Greece October 28, 1940, eighteen years later.*

[4] *Italy's peacetime consumption of coal is estimated by the Foreign Policy Association to be twelve to fourteen million metric tons a year, of which, in 1938, only 2,300,000 tons, mostly low grade, came from Italian mines. In 1937 Italian production of oil totaled 14,260 tons,*

MR. HALPERIN: You can't get to first base in modern warfare without those, can you?

MR. SMOTHERS: Precisely not! Italy was all right as long as this was a war of bluff, so to speak, but as soon as the bluff had to be substantiated by action. . . . .

MR. BORGESE: As long as it was a thunder war and not a blitzkrieg.

MR. SMOTHERS: Precisely!

MR. HALPERIN: And, of course, these material factors don't tell the whole story, do they, Borgese?

MR. BORGESE: No. There is certainly the unfortunate poverty of Italy which has been popularly described as "a cutlet with a little meat." The northern valley of the Po is the meat, and the rest just a long bone.

MR. HALPERIN: A very apt comparison I should say.

MR. BORGESE: But besides that there are moral factors. The poor, innocent Italian people have been misled toward a persistent daydream: the resurrection of the Roman Empire. That is the dream that has also seized the perverted, the second-rate mind of Mussolini, who for years has thought he could build a Roman Empire again.

MR. HALPERIN: What about such things as the unreadiness of the Italian army and the corruption in high military places in Italy? We don't hear so much about that, but there must be a good deal of it.

MR. BORGESE: Certainly. There was graft; there was disorganization. If you read the speech Mussolini gave at the *Teatro Adriano* a few days ago, you noticed he alibis for that. He says that

---

while 2,250,000 tons were imported. Albania, which had been thought of as a possible source of oil, is not productive as long as the Italo-Greek war continues.

Italy was unprepared; that she was not ready because she had helped Spain. As a matter of fact they gave to Spain (if we accept Mussolini's figures[5]) only one-tenth of Italy's military expenditures during the past five years (*see pictograph, page 16*).

MR. HALPERIN: There is also the question of morale. Smothers, you have spent some time in Italy; you have talked to a lot of people and have observed their reactions to international affairs. Morale must be playing a tremendous role right now, don't you think?

MR. SMOTHERS: Unquestionably. There isn't the slightest doubt that long before this war began the Italian people were suffering tremendously in morale. They didn't want this war. They showed it in the months preceding the war.

MR. HALPERIN: Didn't they want peace first of all?

MR. SMOTHERS: Precisely! I remember in the days preceding Munich[6] (when it appeared to the Italians that Mussolini was going to drag them into war on Germany's side) seeing men standing before the newspaper kiosks, men of military age who would have to go to war. They stood in absolute silence reading the reports which indicated that they were going to fight. Not one of them commented one way or the other, because they were against it and because they did not want their words reported to the police.

MR. BORGESE: Don't you think that, in spite of that, the be-

---

[5] *Early in March Italy sent a bill to Spain for services rendered in the Spanish Civil War. For 763 planes, 1,414 motors, 1,672 tons of bombs, 1,930 cannon, 7,668 motor vehicles, 10,135 automatic guns, 240,747 small arms, 9,250,000 rounds of aircraft ammunition, 7,514,534 rounds of artillery ammunition, and 324,900,000 rounds of small arms ammunition. Mussolini charged 5,500,000,000 lire (7,500,000,000 lire minus 2,000,000,000 lire discounted "for good will") equivalent to $277,750,000. The debt is to be paid in 24 annual installments (Time, March 10, 1941, p. 30).*

[6] *In August and September, 1938.*

havior of most of the press has been rather ungenerous toward the Italian people? After having praised Mussolini and fascism for so many years, the press is heaping dishonor on the Italian people, representing them as a people with a constitution incapable of fighting this unfortunate and miserable war. There was the desert effort in Keren,[7] and in Albania they have fled 60 miles in three months.

MR. SMOTHERS: Yes, but I think I would make two amendments to that. In the first place, not all the press took the position that Mussolini was a good proposition (there were plenty of anti-fascists even before the war). Second, although I quite agree with you that the Italians fight admirably when they have their hearts in it, they haven't had their hearts in this war.

MR. HALPERIN: They showed fight in 1918, for example.

MR. SMOTHERS: But they haven't had their hearts in this war. They didn't have their hearts in it before it began and the results of their fighting have been bad.

MR. BORGESE: How can they have their hearts in a war that should be fought either for glory—which is certainly not a passion that can inflame the poor man—or under the hoax that such an empire as was promised to them could give them prosperity—raw materials, and so on? You have been in Italy and know the situation very well and you know that this empire is just deserts, just glory, just colors on the map.

MR. SMOTHERS: In that very connection I remember an incident which showed the state of mind of the Italians over Abyssinia. As you know, they were whipped up to something of a war fever during the Abyssinian campaign[8] by sanctions, but after it

---

[7] *Keren, in Italian Eritrea, has been besieged by the British for over a month.*

[8] *In 1935–36. Addis Ababa, the capital of Ethiopia, was entered by the Italians May 5, 1936, and the country was officially annexed to Italy June 1, 1936, when Italian Somaliland, Eritrea, and Ethiopia were united to form Italian East Africa.*

was over the idea was gradually driven into their minds that they were not going to get rich from their empire by the fact that they were eating less and less. For one thing, they had a plan for self-sufficiency which prevented Italy from getting the wheat necessary for her bread. Bread became very, very bad.[9]

There was a statue of the famous "Lion of Judah" near the principal Rome railway station—a trophy of the Abyssinian war. One day an Italian wit, when the police were not looking (when the police, as a matter of fact, were still asleep), tied a piece of bad Italian bread to the tail of the lion with a note reading, "You gave us this bread; now eat it!"

MR. BORGESE: That is a story with a precedent, because many years before the Abyssinian war the humble Italian thought that way. I remember the day in Florence when many lampoons were affixed reading, "*Viva il Duce, che alla fame ci conduce!*" which in English means, "Long live the Duce, who is leading us to starvation!"

MR. HALPERIN: There is no doubt at all that the decline and fall of the modern Roman Empire can be pictured in terms of these various Italian defeats and the stringencies throughout the country, but we must remember that there is another way of picturing this situation. Several of our listeners have asked us to discuss, for example, the present nature of Italo-German relations. Just what is the relationship now between the strong partner and the weak partner in the Axis? I think we can throw much further light on this picture.

---

[9] *One after another of Italy's staple foods have been rationed. Due to partial failure of the 1940 wheat crop (see pictograph, page 15) a decree published on October 1, 1940, stipulated that 85 per cent of wheat milled must be bread flour, an order superseding a peacetime regulation (70 per cent) and an earlier war measure (80 per cent). On December 1, 1940, a new requirement went into effect: that from that date all bread should contain 25 per cent corn meal and 75 per cent wheat flour (Foreign Commerce Weekly, January 18, 1941).*

MR. SMOTHERS: As a matter of fact, more and more, Italy is becoming the tail on the Nazi dachshund, so to speak.

MR. HALPERIN: And Mussolini has become a sort of Quisling.[10]

MR. SMOTHERS: Yes, inevitably so, because Mussolini made the terrible mistake of tying himself exclusively to a partner so much stronger than himself.

MR. HALPERIN: Machiavelli[11] said that it was very bad for a prince to ally himself with a stronger prince against some other power. And Machiavelli, you remember—the great Italian writer (to an edition of whose book, *The Prince,* Mussolini wrote a preface) —was always regarded as the great mentor of Mussolini. Now Mussolini has disregarded one of the principal injunctions contained in *The Prince.* That throws a very interesting light on the degree of faithfulness with which Mussolini has followed the teachings of his revered teachers.

MR. SMOTHERS: But the fact that he follows Hitler is no sign that the Italian people like Hitler or the Germans. You were asking about Italian feeling toward the Germans. Historically, of course, there has been a certain ill feeling toward the Germans.

MR. HALPERIN: They just don't like the Germans at all so far as I can gather.

MR. BORGESE: That depends upon the district. In the South this feeling is less widespread; but certainly the North has traditionally disliked the Germans, and I don't think that they all like them now. But you were speaking of infiltration. There is something more than infiltration.

---

[10] *Major Vidkun Quisling was the former Norwegian Defense Minister and fascist leader who now is recognized by Germany as the puppet ruler of Norway.*

[11] *Niccolò Machiavelli (1469–1527) was an Italian statesman and author whose best known work "The Prince" has connected his name with "practical realism" as a technique of statecraft.*

MR. HALPERIN: I think it is very significant that the Germans have actually insinuated themselves into high places in Italy.

MR. SMOTHERS: Yes, and the more this was true, the more the Axis became the basis of Italian policy, the more the specter of war on the side of Germany rose, the more heightened was the feeling against Germany.

I remember, for example, in our own household in Rome a typical incident. We had a maid who was extremely patriotic, a simple girl who loved the Duce and who used to say that she was going to go to Spain and be a Red Cross nurse for Mussolini. When it appeared to her (just before the Munich crisis) that Italy was going to be dragged into the war on the side of Germany, she came in tears to my wife and said: "Mrs. Smothers, we don't want to fight on the side of the Germans. The Germans are not *simpatico;* they are cruel people." Then the old World War propaganda came back to her and she said, "They cut the hands off little babies." That was typical.

MR. HALPERIN: Yes, but I suppose more important from the realistic point of view right now is the fact that German control has been extended over Italy.

MR. BORGESE: The German occupation of Sicily began in December and it has extended much farther and much deeper than people here generally suppose.

MR. HALPERIN: Can you give us some figures?

MR. BORGESE: There are at present not less than 10,000 Nazi airmen and two divisions of Nazi land troops in Sicily. With an increase in their number, and with the feeling that the island was in their power, the Germans began to act with arrogance and insolence. There were riots; there was oppression.[12]

MR. HALPERIN: More important than that, perhaps, is the fact that you have, presumably, German garrisons in those centers

---

[12] *In December, 1940.*

of potential revolt in Italy; that you have Germans occupying high administrative positions and pulling wires behind the scenes. . . . .

MR. SMOTHERS: And the German *Gestapo*.

MR. HALPERIN: . . . . determining policies in all directions.

MR. BORGESE: And so-called experts who have taken the place of many officials. . . . .

MR. HALPERIN: . . . . who have been sent to the colors.

MR. BORGESE: . . . . or of ministers who have gone to the battlefield.

MR. SMOTHERS: I was much interested in a notice a couple of weeks ago that Mussolini had declared all of Italy a war zone. Why did he do it? It prevents foreigners from going outside of Rome to investigate. It is clearly a move to cut down the amount of information ordinary Italians or foreign investigators can get. Why? I think it is because of the increased German infiltration.

MR. BORGESE: Partly, yes.

MR. HALPERIN: How near to revolution is the situation in Italy? To what extent is Mussolini's personal position in jeopardy? Have the defeats, privations, and sufferings brought Italy to the verge of internal collapse and threatened Mussolini's regime and his own personal fortunes?

MR. SMOTHERS: I am pretty confident that there would be excellent chances for an Italian revolution here and now were it not for the fact that I believe the Germans would stop it, as long as they have the power to—if necessary by an actual occupation.

MR. HALPERIN: Just assume for the sake of argument that the Germans were not there and it was up to the Italians to decide just what they wanted to do and what kind of regime they wanted to set up.

MR. SMOTHERS: Mussolini would go, I think, under those circumstances. As a matter of fact, his prestige has slipped very

rapidly ever since he tied himself so completely to the Nazis. When the *Anschluss*[13] came along; when the Italians were obliged to realize that Mussolini had changed his old policy of keeping the Austrian buffer; when he blessed Hitler in taking Austria, and went to the Brenner Pass, his prestige slipped. Then he copied Hitler and introduced the goose-step. I have heard German officers in Rome express their scorn for it.

MR. BORGESE: Mussolini calls it the Roman step.

MR. SMOTHERS: Yes, the *Passo Romano.* Then when Mussolini began his Jew-baiting campaign in imitation of Hitler, that again hit his prestige. We all had the feeling that his prestige was slipping to the extent that a major military defeat would put him in great danger. Now he has had that defeat.

MR. HALPERIN: Then we must remember that fascist propaganda in Italy during the last several months has been hitting hard at one point. That is, that no matter how many defeats Italy has been suffering, no matter how many men she has lost, no matter how many ships have been sunk, no matter how many planes have been destroyed, Germany, the all-powerful Nazi Germany, will win very quickly, and any German victory will automatically be an Italian victory. These fascists have been saying to their own people that this year, 1941, is bound to be the crucial year; the year of final Axis victory, unless America intervenes. And they say, "Oh, well, America, a pluto-democracy, never means anything anyway." Of course they are covering up fear. But it seems to me that the fact that the fascists have emphasized that 1941 is the final year means that if England is very much in the fight at the end of this year there is bound to be a complete collapse of Italian morale, and Mussolini's position will then be much more like that of Quisling.

MR. SMOTHERS: Definitely!

MR. BORGESE: That doesn't mean, though, the end of Mussolini or of fascism.

---

[13] *In March, 1938.*

MR. HALPERIN: German Naziism will have to be defeated first, of course. Their destinies are very definitely tied together, as Luigi Sturzo has said.[14]

MR. BORGESE: It is very difficult to kill a corpse. One can admit that Italian fascism is dead, but its place will be taken by Naziism in Italy unless England develops energy and forces sufficient to attack Italy directly, which has not happened so far. If England had occupied Sicily ahead of Hitler perhaps things might have happened. The future is obscure, but what we can foresee is that as long as Italy is not attacked directly, and as long as the Nazis keep Europe in their grip, there isn't a hope for the Italians to be delivered.

MR. HALPERIN: Hitler will bolster Mussolini as long as that sort of action is necessary.

MR. SMOTHERS: In other words, the only hope for the Italian people is a defeat of Hitler.

MR. HALPERIN: Yes—a complete house-cleaning which would involve, of course, the defeat of Hitler as well as the defeat of Mussolini.

MR. SMOTHERS: Precisely!

MR. BORGESE: Even if they could hope that a victory with Hitler could give them some kind of reward—and that is the theme on which Mussolini harped so much in his lamentable speech at the *Teatro Adriano*—what could they get?[15] Only the fragments of English and French empires that Hitler would grant to them. They could get something into their bag, but the bag would be in the hands of Hitler.

MR. HALPERIN: And, of course, Mussolini is beginning to tell

---

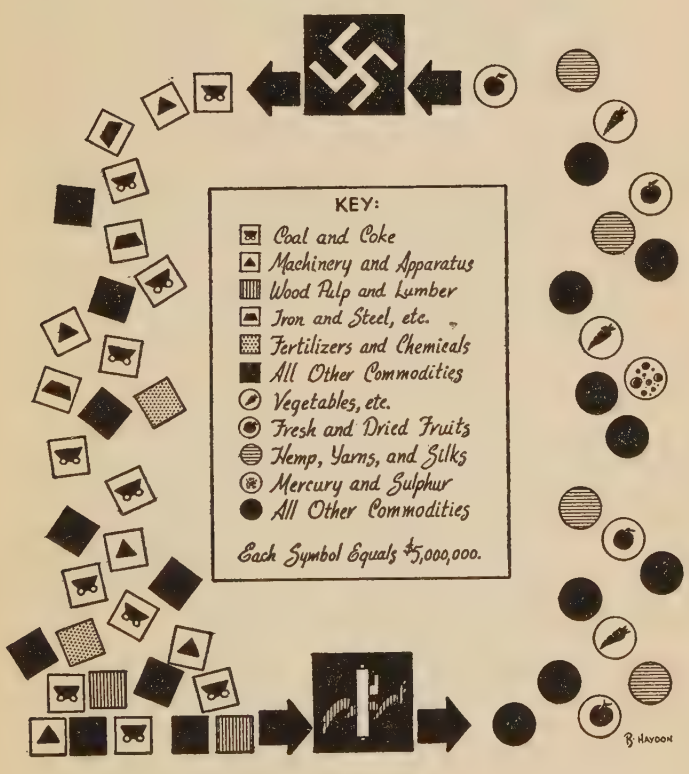
[14] *Founder of the Italian People's party. For his views on the present Italian situation, see the reference in the list of suggested readings on page 23.*

[15] *February 23, 1941.*

ITALY IN WARTIME

An Economic Summary from Official Sources

GERMAN-ITALIAN TRADE



BASED ON U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE STUDIES OF 1938-39 TRADE

SAVING RAW MATERIALS

Italian War Measures Governing the Use of Tin

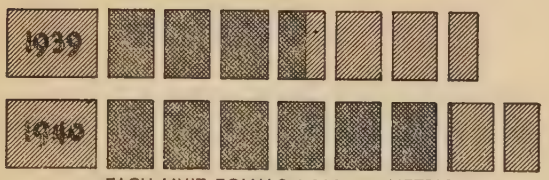
To obtain a can of food the consumer must take an empty can to the grocer. Receipts for empty cans collected by the Scrap Collecting Institute must be presented to the manufacturer to obtain an equal number of filled cans. The manufacturer in turn exchanges these receipts for new tinned sheets sufficient to manufacture an equal number of new cans. The amount of tin available for use is determined by the General Commissariat for War Manufactures the Ministry of Corporations, and the National Confederation of Manufacturers. Glass wood and paper containers are being substituted, wherever possible, and it is estimated that 70 per cent of the tin used may be reclaimed and 80 per cent of the former production made from it.

R. Havoon

SELECTED ECONOMIC ITEMS

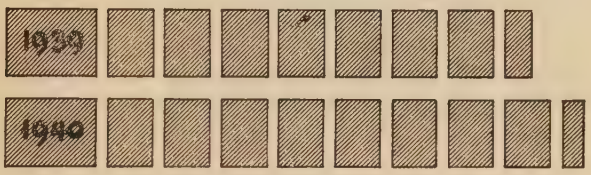
COAL IMPORTS

FIRST 7 MONTHS



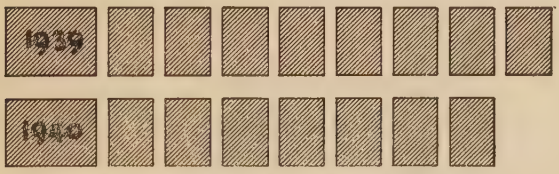
EACH UNIT EQUALS 1,000,000 METRIC TONS
DARKER UNITS: FROM GERMANY

RICE PRODUCTION



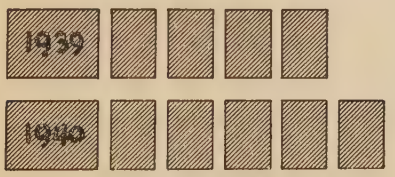
EACH UNIT EQUALS 100,000 METRIC TONS

WHEAT PRODUCTION



EACH UNIT EQUALS 1,000,000 METRIC TONS

COTTON PRODUCTION



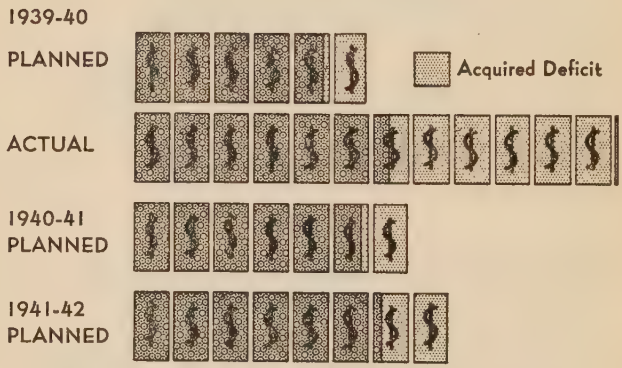
EACH UNIT EQUALS 10,000 BALES OF 478 LBS.

SOURCE: U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

ITALY'S FINANCES

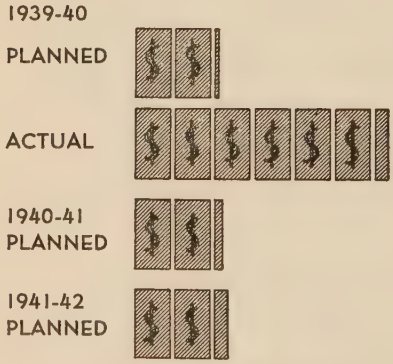
The Budget and Military Expenditures

THE NATIONAL BUDGET



EACH COMPLETE SYMBOL EQUALS 250,000,000 DOLLARS

ARMY, NAVY, AND AIRFORCE BUDGETS



EACH COMPLETE SYMBOL EQUALS 250,000,000 DOLLARS

LATEST OFFICIAL DATA FROM U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
NOTE: 19.8 LIRA = $1.00

his people now (as he told them in his recent speech) that this may be a long war. He is beginning to back-track now on these repeated assurances that this year would see final victory. But that isn't going to change matters very much, because people in Italy have been keyed up for months to believe that victory would come very shortly.

MR. SMOTHERS: Mussolini's alibis have become time-worn to the Italians, too. "It is the same thing now that we had before." I know that some of the Italian soldiers went to Spain thinking they were going to Abyssinia. The Italian press has lied to the people for a long time. They were told it was to be an easy, short war. As you pointed out, it is developing into a long and disastrous war, and confidence was already very thin in what he had to say even before the war began.

MR. HALPERIN: What about the future of Italy? What does all this mean for the years to come? What is in store for Italy in case of a German victory? What is in store for Italy in case of a British victory?

Borgese, you have some very definite ideas about that and you have written on that subject.

MR. BORGESE: I think one must distinguish between this corruption of Italian culture and of the Italian mind that is represented in this daydream of the resurrection of the Roman Empire, and by the theory of ruthless force found in a nation which has not enough force to compete with the giants of the earth, and a second set of traditions which you, an expert in Italian history . . . .

MR. HALPERIN: Thank you very much!

MR. BORGESE: . . . . know very well. Italy has contributed very much to the idea of a world-society, of brotherhood among nations.

MR. HALPERIN: You are entirely right!

MR. BORGESE: Mazzini, Garibaldi, and the other heroes of the *Risorgimento*[16] have made a great contribution.

MR. HALPERIN: And too many people are prone to forget that contribution.

MR. BORGESE: Too many people are ready to forget about it, but much of the fault lies with the Italian people who have deserted this conception of Italy's true destination. At any rate, I think it can have a resurgence, that it can have a new *risorgimento*.

MR. SMOTHERS: There can be if the democracies win this war.

MR. HALPERIN: Yes, the future of Italy seems entirely hopeless if Germany wins. The best role that Italy might hope for would be that of an appendage, a province of the Greater Germany. As far as being a part of the European breadbasket. . . . .

MR. BORGESE: They are already experiencing what that means. The ration of fats to Italians has been reduced to a total of 400 grams a month, including everything—butter, olive oil, and so on—and the prices are set by Germany. So there is a state of undernourishment, certainly, even if you don't want to call it starvation.[17]

MR. SMOTHERS: Of course, that is typical all over Europe, and the Italians probably aren't much worse off in that respect than any other belligerent except Britain.

---

[16] *Risorgimento is the name applied to the period of Italian history between the Napoleonic era and the unification of Italy in 1870. It was a period of liberal and nationalistic development, led by Giuseppe Mazzini (1805–1872) and Giuseppe Garibaldi (1807–1882).*

[17] *The rations of olive oil, butter, and fat were reduced February 21, 1941. On October 1, 1940, the ration of 800 grams (28 ounces) per month of these items was introduced. The ration now in effect, 400 grams per month, represents a 50 per cent cut in a figure which, it was estimated in the New York Times, was two-thirds of the peacetime norm. On March 1 the use of pastry and ice cream was prohibited and on March 15 sweet bread with raisins ("panettoni") is to be forbidden.*

MR. HALPERIN: Of course, they are very poor in resources, and they are bound to suffer more cruelly. The others are better endowed by nature.

MR. SMOTHERS: They are suffering without hope if Hitler wins this war. They have an empire that looks pretty good on the map. As Borgese said a little while ago, as a fief they aren't going to have any independence left.

MR. HALPERIN: And, in the event of a British victory ———?

MR. BORGESE: There is hope, because there are Italians who have always been against Mussolini and fascism, and many more would appear. The real position of Italy in a federated world-society would be a very honorable and admirable one. I think also that the mass of the Italo-Americans, of the Italians who live abroad, could be helpful, could exert action, provided a loyalty to the American ideal of life is enhanced and cultivated.

MR. HALPERIN: Yes, and I think that Americans must realize that in the event of a collapse of fascism there is a very strong possibility (in the event of a Hitler defeat) of the restoration of a truly democratic and liberal regime in Italy, restoring the rights of individuals and all that sort of thing.

MR. SMOTHERS: Yes! And I think that puts a tremendous responsibility upon us and upon the British, because if Italy is to have her chance for a genuine rebirth of this co-operative spirit that Borgese has spoken about, the impetus for it, probably the plan for it, must come primarily from America and from Britain. If we set up a bad peace, Italy will suffer.

MR. HALPERIN: They are the only ones who can dictate a peace.

MR. SMOTHERS: We can set up the sort of peace that will reconstruct Italy.

MR. HALPERIN: We must encourage those elements in Italy

which are likely to be active in restoring a liberal and a democratic society.

MR. BORGESE: And we should not prescribe for them their kind of revolution. I think the propaganda of Churchill with his leaflet had some good to it and some bad, because he even said: "I do not deny that he, Mussolini, is a great man," and he indicated to the Italians what kind of moderate revolution they should have. I think the Italians, if ever they are awake again, should be left free to have their own revolution.

MR. SMOTHERS: Definitely!

MR. HALPERIN: And, of course, Americans must recognize that the Italian government is the agency largely responsible for the things that have happened over there and must distinguish between the Italian government and those large forces in Italian life that may mark a rebirth of a liberal, democratic regime in that country.

MR. SMOTHERS: We should avoid trying simply to bolster up the forces which might conceivably be defined as the "better element," but which would return to the old conservative, reactionary regime which preceded fascism.

MR. BORGESE: Certainly!

MR. HALPERIN: And, of course, the closing of the Italian consulates at Newark and at Detroit is indicative of the fact that this country is beginning to recognize the role of the Italian government as distinguished from that of the Italian people.[18]

MR. SMOTHERS: Definitely! I think it was a good move. Of

---

[18] *On March 6, 1941, the United States formally requested the Italian government to restrict the movements of its consular officials and agents in this country to their own districts and to close its consulates in Detroit, Michigan, and Newark, New Jersey. Most observers suggested this action was retaliation for the closing of American consulates in Naples and Palermo.*

course, it was done in reprisal, but it was a good move because those Italian consulates have been the agents of Mussolini.

MR. HALPERIN: Do you have any data on that?

MR. SMOTHERS: Well, I think Borgese will agree with me when I say that those consulates have been attempting to keep the Italian people (the Americans of Italian origin) thinking as Italians rather than as Americans.

MR. BORGESE: Absolutely true! It was their duty, in a way. That is what they considered their duty to be. It is deplorable that attempts in the other direction have not been made on the scale necessary to counteract their activities. Only now are we starting to have some beginnings of organizations of Italians who feel in the American way, and who can be an extremely helpful reservoir for the resurgence of Italy when the day comes.

MR. SMOTHERS: For instance?

MR. BORGESE: Well, for instance, let us speak of the Mazzini Society in New York, or of other organizations of this kind, that have the plan of building up faithful, loyal Americans who at the same time will be good Italians.[19]

MR. HALPERIN: And that sort of thing will have to go on and on. That increasing awareness of responsibility of Italian-Americans in the future fate of Italy is something which has to become more and more the common property of Italian-Americans in this country.

MR. BORGESE: Without their feeling as Italians, as a separate group. They are so important and so numerous that they can have an influence in favor of both America and their former country.

---

[19] *The Mazzini society "is composed of Americans of Italian birth and Italian residents in the United States who remain faithful to the liberal tradition of the Italian Risorgimento and to the ideals of liberty and democracy upon which the Constitution of the United States is based."*

MR. HALPERIN: To summarize this discussion, we may say that povery and lack of war enthusiasm have accounted for the present situation in Italy; that Mussolini has become increasingly dependent upon the Germans; that the Germans are increasingly taking over vital positions of power in Italy, and for all practical purposes Mussolini has become a kind of Italian Quisling.

I think we are also agreed that the future of Italy is necessarily, of course, uncertain, but that a few things can be predicted with a fair degree of confidence. For one thing, an Axis victory will automatically mean that Italy is bound to become a mere fief of Germany; that she will lose those most precious rights of independence and of freedom and a right to her own existence without which no nation can achieve greatness. In the event of a British victory, there might be for Italy, as in other countries, certain economic difficulties, certain problems that will arise which will have to be solved with Italian resources, and possibly with the aid of others. Yet a democratic victory will mean this above all else: that, though Italy will be in difficult straits, she will have won the most precious thing: the power, the privilege, and the opportunity to make herself free and independent again.

SUGGESTED READINGS

Borgese, G. A., *Goliath: The March of Fascism.* New York: Viking Press, 1937. *The background of culture and politics underlying the rise of Italian fascism.*

DeWeerd, H. A., "Italy's Military Failure," *Events*, February, 1941. *A description of Italy's North African war.*

Gervasi, Frank, "It'd Better Be Good, Benito," *Collier's*, March 1, 1941. *A survey of Italian reactions to the war and of the political strength of Mussolini at home and abroad.*

"Italy at War," *Living Age*, January, 1941. *A cross-section study of the home front.*

Keene, Frances, editor, *Neither Liberty nor Bread.* New York: Harper & Bros., 1940. *A collection of essays on fascism in Italy, by a group of distinguished writers.*

Stowe, Leland, "I Saw Mussolini Humbled," *Look*, February 11, 1941. *Why Italy is losing in Greece.*

Sturzo, Luigi, "Italy at the Crossroads," *Commonweal*, February 21, 1941. *An analysis of how the Duce and Italy will fare when the war ends, written by the founder of the Italian People's party.*

Todorou, Kosta, "In Defense of Italian Soldiers," *American Mercury*, April, 1941.

Werner, Max, *Military Strength of the Powers.* New York: Modern Age Books, 1939. *Chapter x of this volume discusses Italy as a military factor in contemporary Europe, evaluating her economic position and her air, land, and naval forces.*

OBJECTIVE QUESTIONS FOR EXAMINATION

The answers to the following questions may be found in the text of the broadcast, and page references are provided to assist in locating the answers.

*

1. The projected Italian conquest of Greece started on the anniversary of what recent event in Italian history? Page 3.
2. Name three resources "necessary for a policy of force" which Italy lacks. Page 3.
3. Locate the industrial section of Italy—that part of the "cutlet" with "a little meat." Page 4.
4. Italian aid to General Franco's forces in the Spanish Civil War bore what relationship to total Italian military expenditures in the last five years? Page 5.
5. What are two possible reasons for Italy's entering the present European war, in the view of the ROUND TABLE experts? Page 6.
6. What famous figure of the late 15th and early 16th century is regarded by many as Mussolini's political mentor? Page 8.
7. The German force at present in Sicily is placed at what figure? Page 9.
8. Give two evidences of Mussolini's mimicking Hitler which, it is said, resulted in loss of prestige by Mussolini. Page 11.
9. Name two of the leaders of the *Risorgimento* which, the participants suggest, may be repeated shortly in Italy. Page 18.
10. Early in March, 1941, Italian consulates in what two American cities were ordered closed? Page 20.

QUESTIONS FOR ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

The following questions of wider scope, intended for discussion, are suggested by the broadcast, and answers may be found in the literature on the subject listed in the section "Suggested Readings," found on page 23.

*

1. Last month in a speech to the Italian people Mussolini compared the British victories in Albania and Africa with the Carthaginian victory over Rome at Cannae, and predicted that Italy would emerge the final victor in the present conflict. How far-reaching have Italian military reverses been? Do you agree that Italy can "come back"? If so, under what conditions?
2. Whether Italy's present reverses are temporary or fundamental, to what do you believe her present plight is due? What part do you believe economic poverty has played in the creation of this situation?
3. Evaluate Italian soldier and civilian morale in the present war and compare it with the morale of the people of Britain, France, Germany, Greece, China, and Finland.
4. Why do you think Italy went to war last June? What do you feel she hoped to gain by entering the conflict? Do you believe the reasons she is now in the war are any different than those which motivated her entry nine months ago?
5. Describe the present relationship between Italy and Germany. Do you believe that Mussolini is Hitler's "prisoner"? That Italy may become a "province" of the Third Reich? Discuss.
6. Do you feel there is any possibility of a revolution in Italy? If so, under what circumstances? What do you think the character of such a revolution would be?
7. Compare the future of Italy if Germany wins the war and the future of Italy if Britain wins the war.

The Listeners' Round Table . . . .

Letters to the ROUND TABLE *frequently contain interesting and illuminating sidelights on the subject matter discussed on the air. These comments are from letters received following the broadcast discussion of "How To Fight Nazi Propaganda" March 2, 1941.*

*

"White Only"

I first met him at Hines Hospital visiting his dad, about two years ago. The other day I met him on South State Street. He was looking for a cheap three-room flat. His landlord had told him the coal-heated firetrap he was living in would be boosted in rent from $25.00 to $30.00 per month. Well, a guy with a wife and two kids has to have a roof and a cookstove, so he was looking for a flat and a job. He, like others of his race, truly patriotic and Christian, expect a decent living from the land his father fought for. He's tried hard to find work. He reads the ads in the daily papers with disgust. Because every available job even in his neighborhood says "White Only."

He even asked about the advertisement you see on the streetcars, the one that reads, "Men Wanted. Tool and Dye Makers. Trades, etc." From his inquiry he learned that the Mayflower did not sail from Africa. Were it not for the C.R.A. and the Catholic Salvage he and his family would be without food and clothes.

His case worker told him they would put him back on the WPA when Congress got through giving away money to Europe. He knows that suffering in Europe means more to American humanity than bad housing, hunger, and misery here at home. He realizes, too, he has to pay for being colored. He pays rent to live in buildings that have been condemned. Should he live in a building that has a nice front, he must pay double what a white person pays in a better district. Yet he must depend upon relief of some form to exist. He can't get the work he is best qualified for. Because of a rule. The rule system is used where colored are not wanted. "As a rule, we don't employ colored." Regardless of his scholastic training, he is debarred because of his race and a RULE of democracy.

This boy should not let the job or the three-room flat worry him too much, because he has a draft number. Democracy demands that he should fight to defend and preserve this rule system, and I am quite sure the draft board won't question his color or what boat his ancestors came over on.

I had started this article to send to the "Voice of the People," *Chicago Tribune*. Since hearing your ROUND TABLE today, it made me think differently. I am sending it to the ROUND

TABLE; by it you may judge how closely one speaker's argument brings out the actual status of the negro today.

It is true, the colored folks are saying to one another, "What have we to fight for in Europe, our fight is right here at home." I am sending my 10¢ for today's ROUND TABLE talks.

A. D., Illinois

*

The Wave of the Future

As the original and constant admirer of the ROUND TABLE, I was pained today when two of your speakers fell into the current cheap and uninformed slander of "The Wave of the Future."

Weren't they, themselves, victims of that "propaganda" about which they were worried?

For I assume they have not read the book. Otherwise, they would know what it says. Its statements are too clear and unequivocal for misunderstanding.

The irony is, in fact, that Anne Lindbergh says exactly what the ROUND TABLE said itself today: change is upon us; it is necessary to do something; we *can* do something, if we have the high purpose.

C. LeR. B., New York

*

The Real Danger

Of what economic good to me is the fact that one of my forebears signed the Declaration of Independence; that another was a General Huntington serving on the staff of General Washington; that another was the President of the Continental Congress; that no member of my family was ever drafted but always volunteered? Here I am, nearing 56, on the WPA project of a geodetic control survey as a rodman at $63.60 a month.

I have been a professional piano tuner since 1900; a graduate optometrist since 1907; an inventor; a musician; a linguist; a man above the average; and what of it all? Can I be employed as a schoolteacher here? No, because the law requires the teacher must be a graduate of a state institution of learning. Can I teach music here? No, because the law requires my musical education should have been acquired in this state. Can I practice optometry here? No, because the State Board of Optometry, which makes its own rules, has ruled that the prospective practitioner must be a graduate of a college having a 4-year course. In 1907 there was no such thing as a 4-year course. Can I be expected to do as they require: return to college and make up the remaining three years? Can I obtain employment as a machinist, carpenter, plumber, or cinema operator? No. Why? Because I do not have the $300 required by the musician's or the cinema operator's unions; or the $100 required by the other unions.

Are such restrictions and impositions likely to cause me to join a "patriotic" parade and holler my lungs out for the maintenance of American democracy? Certainly not.

So, as you stated, here comes Hitler, or Mussolini or Stalin, or who have you? He or they assure you that, upon attaining power, you will be employed steadily at a good wage; that your economic future is assured; that you will

not be exploited by a profit-motivated person; that your wife, during and after pregnancy, will be cared for without any worry to you; that your children will receive their education without any headaches for you; etc. Are not all these roseate promises conducive to making you embrace their doctrine? Certainly. And that is the reason of our present social, economic, and political hysteria. Remove those fears and you will have "healthy democracy."

H. S-H., New Jersey

ROUND TABLE SUBSCRIPTION ORDER FORM

Please send the University of Chicago ROUND TABLE for:

☐ One Year ($2.00) ☐ Six Months ($1.00)

Name.....

Address.....

City.....State.....

☐ I am enclosing the correct amount

☐ Please send me a bill

FOREIGN: ONE YEAR, $3.00; SIX MONTHS, $1.50

TRANSCRIPT SUBSCRIPTIONS

ONE YEAR'S SUBSCRIPTION.....$2.00 SIX MONTHS'.....$1.00

FOR SINGLE COPIES OF THE BROADCASTS LISTED BELOW SEND TEN CENTS IN COIN TO THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO ROUND TABLE, CHICAGO, ILLINOIS. ANY FIVE PAST OR FUTURE BROADCASTS, 25 CENTS.

Nos.

1939

56. *Hitler's Economic Motives*
57. *"Room to Live!" Population Pressure and Aggression*
60. *Refugees*
61. *If Europe Paid Its Debts*
63. *What Do You Mean—Americanism?*
64. *Russia and Europe*
65. *Freedom and the Economic System*
66. *The Place of Radio in a Democracy*
67. *Questions on Democracy*
68. *Our Liberties Today*
69. *Crisis in the Orient*
71. *Out of School—Out of Jobs*
74. *Is the Consumer Getting His Nickel's Worth?*
79. *The High Cost of Living*
82. *Prosperity vs. Boom*
83. *International Law—What Is It?*
84. *The Economic War*
85. *What's the War All About?*
86. *Testing Public Opinion*
87. *After the Next Armistice—What?*
88. *Taxes*
91. *Can Capitalism Survive the War?*
92. *Government and Business*
93. *When Tomorrow Comes*
94. *1939: Crisis Year*

1940

95. *Wages and Hours in the North and South*
98. *The Jews*
100. *Is Russia Losing in Finland?*
101. *Tariff Walls*
102. *War Myths*
104. *Is America's Economic Frontier Closed?*
105. *Must the World Unite?*
106. *Can We Protect America?*
108. *The Archbishops Look at America*
109. *Scandinavia on the Spot*
111. *Where's that War Boom?*
112. *The Trojan Horse*

Nos.

113. *Blitzkrieg, May, 1940*
114. *America and the Peacemongers*
115. *Babies Cost Money*
117. *Have We Time to Think?*
118. *Italy Marches.* June 16, 1940
119. *America's Capacity to Arm*
120. *Economic Union for the Americas*
121. *Civil Liberties and the Fifth Column*
122. *M-Day and America*
124. *Should America Conscript Men Now?*
125. *The New France*
126. *What Really Happened at Havana?*
128. *Blitzkrieg on Britain.*
129. *Should America Aid Britain?*
130. *Should America Feed Europe?*
131. *Can Germany Conquer Latin America?*
132. *Conscript Wealth, Too?*
134. *Will Hitler Attack America Next?*
135. *YOU, Soldier*
136. *The Balkans Aflame*
137. *Warmongers and Appeasers*
138. *Polls and the Election*
140. *World Revolution*
141. *Art and Our Warring World*
142. *The Soviet Union and America*
143. *Is Hitler Revolutionizing Britain?*
144. *Where Are Those 50,000 Planes?*
146. *1951: The Next Decade in Education*

1941

147. *More Aid to Britain Now?*
148. *Is This Our War?*
149. *Morale: First Line of Defense?*
150. *Can Capitalism Defend America?*
151. *The Last Ten Years*
152. *Can the Americas Be Invaded?*
153. *Guns or Butter?*
154. *Dilemma in the Far East.*
155. *How To Fight Nazi Propaganda.* March 2

[SUBSTITUTE FOR ANNOUNCED PROGRAM]

STRIKES and NATIONAL DEFENSE

•

A SPECIAL UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO ROUND TABLE BROADCAST

•

MARCH 16, 1941

•

PAUL H. DOUGLAS, Professor of Economics, University of Chicago

RALEIGH W. STONE, Associate Professor of Industrial Relations, University of Chicago

and the

ROVING REPORTER

[PRINTED IN U.S.A.]